

# *Best Of* Tree Country

the external newsletter of the SC Forestry Commission

FALL 2022



South Carolina  
**Forestry Commission**

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## *Best of* Tree Country

Best of Tree Country is published quarterly by the South Carolina Forestry Commission in the winter, spring, summer and fall.

The Commission is solely responsible for the content of this newsletter, but welcomes appropriate submissions from allied organizations, industry partners, consultant foresters, elected officials, landowners and private citizens.

Please contact SCFC Director of Communications Doug Wood at (803) 896-8820 or [dwood@scfc.gov](mailto:dwood@scfc.gov) to submit information, articles and/or photographs.

The Forestry Commission reserves the right to edit or exclude submissions based on its own editorial criteria.

South Carolina Forestry Commission  
5500 Broad River Road, Columbia SC 29212  
(803) 896-8800 | [www.scfc.gov](http://www.scfc.gov)



### ON THE COVER

The cover photo is of Table Rock Mountain taken last fall.

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE



### Success Stories

SCFC announces employee recognition awards; Stars align for prevention campaign; Pee Dee personnel support Marion tree planting project.



### Conservation Roundtable

The SCFC hosted a Conservation Agencies Roundtable at the Harbison State Forest Environmental Education Center in September.



### Legislative Forestry Tour

The SCFC provided a field tour for legislative staff in September to show them the different services that the agency provides.



### Black River Unit Training

The Black River Unit held a dozer operator training class in Carvers' Bay in Georgetown County Aug. 9.



Volunteers and Marion staff planted 200 trees March 19 in Marion to combat flooding.



## SUCCESS STORIES

Showing off their awards are, from left to right, Construction & Property Manager David Owen, Senior Administrative Assistant Ashley McFadden, Project Forester Chase Folk and Public Information Coordinator Justin Holt.

USC Head Football Coach Shane Beamer jokes around with the video production crew before shooting his spot for the Forestry Commission.

## Employee Recognition Awards Program Honors Employees Who Go Above and Beyond

Congratulations are in order for the five winners of the Forestry Commission's inaugural employee recognition awards! After reviewing 61 nominations for 44 unique employees in each of the agency's three regions of the state, the selection committee recommended the top vote-getters in each of the five award categories to State Forester Scott Phillips, who affirmed the results and notified the winners of their honors at the beginning of the month.

And the winners are...

- Forest Protection Distinguished Service Award - **James "Heavy" Price**, Pilot
- Forest Management Distinguished Service Award - **Chase Folk**,

Project Forester

- Team Player Award - **Ashley McFadden**, Senior Administrative Assistant
- Communicator of the Year - **Justin Holt**, Public Information Coordinator
- State Forester's Distinguished Service Award - **David Owen**, Construction & Property Manager

The winners were invited to the Aug. 11 commissioners' meeting, where they were recognized and presented with engraved wooden awards marking their achievements. All were able to attend except Price, whose prize was accepted on his behalf by Pee Dee Regional Forester Mike Ney. Pee Dee Pilot James Price, affectionally known as "Heavy," won the Forest Protection Distinguished Service Award in grand fashion, amassing the most nominations

(11) of any employee for his selfless dedication to serving as a trusted "eye in the sky," protecting fellow personnel during wildfires. "He always goes above and beyond to make sure



Pee Dee Pilot James "Heavy" Price won the Forest Protection Distinguished Service Award, although he was unable to attend the awards ceremony.



Left: The State Forester's Distinguished Service Award, the highest honor of the five awards, is a solid maple wood slab and includes walnut & cherry leafwood appliques layered to create a forest scene. Right: The other four eco-friendly awards are live-edge wooden plaques, each handcrafted from salvaged, windfallen maple featuring solar-powered laser engraving.

firefighters on the ground stay safe,” said one nomination, which echoed the commendations of many others. “Heavy checks on firefighters via radio even when he’s not on the fire himself... he personally cares for” us... “he’s instrumental in helping initial attack units determine the best routes”... “he makes everyone feel safe.”

A 24-year veteran of the agency, Fairfield/Newberry/Union Project Forester Chase Folk was selected to receive the Forest Management Distinguished Service Award based on the strength of multiple nominations from his co-workers. Among the praise for Folk was a consistent emphasis on his meticulous devotion to achieving landowners’ management objectives; his great rapport with agency’s natural resource partners such as DNR and NRCS, among others; and his mentorship of younger foresters, technicians and fellow incident management team members.

Ashley McFadden, a relative newcomer to the agency who started with the Forestry Commission just two years ago, won the Team Player Award for embodying the “commitment to

service, cooperation and excellence that this award seeks to honor,” as one nomination succinctly stated. Although she is tasked with a wide-ranging set of official job functions in her role as the Protection Section’s senior administrative assistant, Ashley can routinely be counted on to offer help to co-workers in other areas of the agency, to eagerly seek out opportunities to improve her own (and others’) performance, and go out of her way to learn more about agency operations, all in the name of process improvement and impeccable customer service.

A member of the Communications & Public Information Division for seven years, Justin Holt was selected as the 2022 Communicator of the Year not only by virtue of his wide range of job functions, most of which involve the timely, accurate and appropriate dissemination of information to a wide variety of audiences, both internal and external, but also by the professionalism, cheerfulness and meticulousness with which he carries out those duties. In his role, Justin has to stay abreast of all things forestry- and wildfire-related, not to mention

the dozens of other subcultures and niches that fall under their purview, but he also has to process information from a wide array of sources to then package it in an easy-to-understand form for the general public to understand.

The highest honor of the five, the State Forester’s Distinguished Service Award, was bestowed on Construction & Property Manager David Owen, who has been with the agency for 22 years. David’s nominations noted that he always provides the highest level of support anytime anyone asks for his assistance. “He’s prompt, thorough and always has a smile on his face,” glowed one nominator, another remarking that David “consistently demonstrates exceptional customer service to both SCFC employees and outside folks... he’s a problem-solver!”

The selection process for the now-annual fiscal-year awards began with an agency-wide call for nominations between April 1 and May 31, which will be the same two-month window open for nominations this fiscal year and in subsequent years.

The selection committee was composed of five members, one each from Administration, Protection, Dispatch, Human Resources, Management, Regional Operations and other areas of the agency (IT, Development, Communications, State Forests, etc.) who serve staggered two-year terms. After this first year of the awards program, three yet-to-be-determined members of the inaugural selection committee will step aside for replacement by new personnel from around the agency.

Those interested in serving on the selection committee for the new fiscal year should, with the approval of their supervisor, reach out to Doug Wood for consideration. Vacancies on the

selection committee will be filled by personnel serving in the same division or section as those stepping down.

## Stars Align for Fall Fire Prevention Campaign

The agency is set to have one of its most wide-reaching and impactful fire prevention efforts ever this fall, thanks to the help of two of the most recognizable personalities in South Carolina.

In their planning to revive the CancelWildfiresSC-branded campaign that was initiated last year to much fanfare the Fire Prevention and Communications staffs endeavored to enlist Clemson University Head Football Coach Dabo Swinney and University of South Carolina Head Football Coach Shane Beamer as spokesmen for this year's drive to curb preventable wildfires.

After reaching out to the two coaches' staffs months in advance, Public Information Coordinator Justin Holt, who before joining the Forestry Commission worked in the USC Athletics Department, was elated to hear back from Associate Athletic Director Steve Fink who responded that Coach Beamer would be happy and proud to participate in the campaign.

Director of Communications Doug Wood was equally excited to receive word from Clemson Assistant Athletic Director Ross Taylor that Coach Swinney wanted to pitch in to help the Forestry Commission as well.

The agency hired a video production crew to shoot Coach Beamer's read of the agency's public service announcement script, which was conducted in mid-August in the USC Athletics practice facility in the shadow of the Gamecocks' William-Brice Stadium in Columbia.

"Beamer was great. He brought so much enthusiasm and energy to the shoot," said Holt. "Barring one minor



Clemson Head Football Coach Dabo Swinney brought his trademark enthusiasm to the agency's 'CancelWildfiresSC' public service announcement, doing several different reads that will be used in a variety of agency messaging across broadcast and social media channels.

hiccup in his first read, he otherwise nailed the spot all the way through. We did a second take just for good measure, but it really wasn't necessary."

While scheduling difficulties ruled out the possibility of the agency's video team filming Coach Swinney in person, the production staff at WSPA-TV in Spartanburg was kind enough to shoot Dabo's script read as part of some other promotional content they were videoing at the Clemson athletic facilities, also in mid-August.

In addition to the two coaches' reads being produced individually as radio and TV spots, the headline PSA that will result from this once-in-a-lifetime collaboration will be a 30-second TV commercial in which both coaches' appearances are weaved into a single, seamless production.

If securing arguably two of the most recognizable and beloved personalities in the Palmetto State for an agency fire prevention campaign weren't amazing enough, the Fire Prevention and Communications staffs got even luckier when they set about procuring a distribution method for the commercials. It just so happened that on the day that

Wood began calling TV networks to compare pricing, he got a call from the executive director of the South Carolina Broadcasters Association who let him know that a three-month slot in the SCBA's Public Education Program (PEP) had just come open.

Many employees may remember that the Forestry Commission already participates in PEP, usually from January to March, in which our agency runs about a dozen in-house-produced PSAs during the legislative session the past several years.

While commercial advertising is very expensive and not usually in reach of our small agency's budget, SCFC takes advantage of this low-cost initiative that allows government agencies and non-profits to buy its member stations' unused airtime at significantly reduced rates.

Fire Prevention Manager Drake Carroll immediately seized on the opportunity to nab the open October-to-December slot, meaning the "CancelWildfiresSC" campaign headlined by both football coaches will run throughout the fall wildfire season. Even better, with the renewal of the agency's January-to-

March PEP slot, Forestry Commission messaging will be front and center on nearly every TV and radio station for an entire six months!

Once again, the focus of the statewide ad campaign “CancelWildfiresSC” is to educate the general public about the prevalence of human-caused wildfires. The campaign centers on the most preventable wildfires – careless debris burning, lax campfire safety, and improper equipment/vehicle use – and how simple, safety-minded actions can help avert the damage they cause to forestland, air & water quality, property and sheer scenic beauty, not to mention the loss of lives.

Be on the lookout for our new spots!

### **Pee Dee Supports Urban Tree Planting Project in Marion**

Special thanks and kudos for a job well done to Horry/Marion Project Forester Caleb Watson, Dillon/Florence Sector FMO Josh Thompson, Georgetown Sector Forestry Technician I Tracey Scalzott and Horry/Marion Sector Forestry Technician I Jody Martin, who volunteered to help plant 114 urban trees in a city of Marion Park this past March. They did a tremendous job,

sacrificed a Saturday to put in some hard labor and truly made this tree planting project a huge success! Thanks to their work, there are now 114 beautiful new trees adorning Green Street Park and the Eloise Recreation Center.

New canopy trees adorning the recreational area include a variety of large and medium-sized canopy trees. Species planted included Swamp white oak, Live oak, Overcup oak, Tulip poplar, Blackgum, Sweetbay magnolia, Persimmon, and Red maple. Their willingness to help, hard work, and positive attitude has been invaluable in this project and serves as a shining example of going above and beyond, solidarity within the agency, and true teamwork. On behalf of the SCFC, the Urban & Community Forestry Program, the SC Floodwater Commission, and the city of Marion, thank you for stepping up to help with this project! Your contribution of work and time are greatly appreciated.

This project was led by members of the SC Floodwater Commission, a group of individuals appointed by Governor McMaster to address community flooding in South Carolina. Projects focused on capitalizing on storm water

absorption by trees as important green infrastructure improves effectiveness of storm water management and both flooding and runoff pollution aversion.

Joelle Teachey, executive director for Trees Upstate, a non-profit focused on community tree planting in the Piedmont/Upstate region of SC, provides leadership for the SC Floodwater Commission’s Technical Advisory Committee and helps coordinate tree planting projects to build more urban canopy in coastal and Pee Dee communities in SC. Technical Advisory Committee members include Piedmont Urban Forester Dena Whitesides, and retired Urban Forester Jimmy Walters. Pee Dee Urban Forester Lois Edwards also assisted with the Marion tree planting project.

Thanks to all SCFC folks, Trees Upstate, the city of Marion, and many other volunteers for working together to plant more urban trees on this project to better protect SC communities in flood-prone areas. Thanks also to Black River Unit Forester Ron Holt and Pee Dee Regional Forester Mike Ney for their support and for sharing your team with us during a critically busy wildfire season.

## **Invasive Species Invade Lexington Blowfish Game**

The Forest Health staff got the opportunity to spread the word about invasive species like the emerald ash borer at Lexington Blowfish baseball games June 24, July 1, July 22 and July 30.

**FOREST HEALTH**  
—David Jenkins

Forest Health Coordinator David Jenkins also gave away an ash bat at each event and enlightened children and adults with the insects.



David entertained these children with his knowledge of insects and they even asked for his autograph on a baseball. Entomologists are rock stars too!

# SCFC Leaders a Part of Clemson Landowner Video

Clemson University's Dr. Patrick Hiesl came to the Forestry Commission headquarters July 21 with a videographer to shoot some segments for a new Clemson Extension video program for new forest landowners. The video is going to be a Forestry 101-type course that may serve as the foundation before taking the Master Tree Farmer program.

A variety of professionals in forestry are being interviewed for the program. The Forestry Commission is one agency highlighted, showing the services we provide and activities. State Forester Scott Phillips, Forest Management Chief Russell Hubright and Protection Chief Darryl Jones were interviewed for the program.

Thanks to Russell for snapping some photos.



Scott Phillips is interviewed by Dr. Patrick Hiesl for a Clemson video program for forest landowners. Scott talks about forestry in the state and the role of the Forestry Commission.



Darryl Jones explains how the Forestry Commission fights fire with dozers and the benefits of prescribed fire.

## SCFC Participates in World's Largest Convoy for Special Olympics



Doug Mills plays the Star Spangled banner to kick off the Special Olympics event Aug. 27.

"The World's Largest Truck Convoy for Special Olympics" took place at the South Carolina Farmer's Market in Columbia August 27. There were 192 trucks that registered for the event, which raised almost \$75,000.

### LAW ENFORCEMENT

—Jonathan Calore



The Forestry Commission participated in the "World's Largest Convoy for Special Olympics" with a truck pulling the 1956 John Deere dozer.



The old 1956 John Deere dozer was pulled in the convoy for Special Olympics.

The SC Forestry Commission had a truck loaded with our 1956 John Deere Fire Dozer and Plow in the convoy. Equipment Coordinator Doug Mills played the Star Spangled Banner on his trumpet to kick off the event and Assistant LE Chief Jonathan Calore assisted with the cooking of the Boston Butts for the barbecue luncheon.



Participants listen to Governor McMaster's comments on the importance of protecting lands from development.

## Forestry Commission Hosts Conservation Agencies Roundtable

The Forestry Commission hosted a Conservation Agencies Roundtable at the Harbison State Forest Environmental Education Center Sept. 8. Leaders from our agency, SC Department of Natural Resources, the SC Office of Resilience, SC Parks, Recreation and Tourism, and the SC Conservation Bank discussed priorities for land protection across South Carolina.

Lending extra importance to this second meeting of the roundtable was the attendance of Gov. Henry McMaster, who was on hand to hear



State Forester Scott Phillips with Governor Henry McMaster at the Conservation Agencies Roundtable at Harbison State Forest Environmental Education Center.

how the agencies are working together to ensure that significant landscapes in the state are protected from development.

He was especially enthusiastic about the agencies' efforts to provide connectivity along corridors such as the Black River in Williamsburg County (<https://tinyurl.com/Black-River-State-Park-video>).

Representing the Forestry Commission were State Forester Scott Phillips, Forest Management Chief Russell Hubright, and State Lands Coordinator James Douglas. Public Information Coordinator Justin Holt was also on hand to help document the event with pictures.

## Fall Tree Farm Field Tour Held in Fairfield

Each year the South Carolina Tree Farm Committee hosts a field tour at the property of the previous year's state Tree Farmer of the Year. Approximately 65 people came out to tour Bill McCrary's Tree Farm in Fairfield and to recognize award recipients Sept. 15.



Retiree Roy Boyd (right) is presented with the 2022 Inspector of the Year award by forester Alan Abernathy. Alan nominated Roy and works with him at Associated Hardwoods.

Forester Roy Boyd was recognized this year as the 2022 Tree Farm Inspector of the Year. The following SCFC employees served various roles during this year's event: Rural Forestry Coordinator Chisolm Beckham, Piedmont Regional Forester Pete Stuckey, Coastal Assistant Regional Forester Kip Terry, Piedmont East Unit Forester Jeff Riffin, Fairfield/Newberry Sector FMO Bruce Ballentine and Forest Management Chief Russell Hubright.

For more information on the Tree Farm program in South Carolina, go to <https://www.sctreefarm.org/>.

### FOREST MANAGEMENT

—Russell Hubright

Several Forestry Commission employees are involved with the Tree Farm program. Santee Unit Forester Annetta Pritchard, who has been serving

as the Tree Farm Tour Chairman for several years, did an excellent job of attending to the dozens of details that made the event a success. Retired Unit



The group pauses for a picture following a tour of the Canfor's Camden sawmill.

## Legislative Staff Takes a Forestry Tour

The Forestry Commission provided a field tour for two budget analysts – Teesha Trapp from the House Ways and Means Committee and Coy Green from the Executive Budget Office Sept. 14. These staff members play important roles in helping the agency develop budget requests each year, so it is very helpful for them to have an understanding and appreciation for the services that the Forestry Commission provides.

### FOREST MANAGEMENT

—Russell Hubright

For this tour, the group gathered at Manchester State Forest and explained the overall mission and organization of the agency. Then, both were given the opportunity to get into the cab of a new fully enclosed bulldozer and watched an



Clarendon/Sumter Sector Forestry Technician I Ken Hodge describes the operation of his dozer to Teesha Trapp.

older bulldozer plow a firebreak. They also traveled to a progeny test, toured the Canfor sawmill in Camden, and visited a Tree Farm in central Kershaw County. State Forester Scott Phillips as well as several SCFC personnel participated in this tour, which both staffers said was both enjoyable and educational.



Pee Dee Regional Forester Mike Ney explains the use of hand tools in firefighting.



State Forester Scott Phillips and Manchester State Forest Forestry Technician/LE Steve Ward with Governor McMaster after signing new litter laws into effect in 2018.

## Ward Finishes Presidency of SC Litter Control

Manchester State Forest Forestry Technician/LE Steve Ward has served as the President of the South Carolina Litter Control Association for the past six years. He decided not to run again and give someone else a chance to bring in new ideas and lead the next chapter of the association. The South Carolina Litter Control Association partners with Palmetto Pride and Keep South Carolina Beautiful to hold an annual conference to get training and new ideas on how to fight litter.

Steve was a part of the group that met with senators and representatives in 2017 and 2018 to update and make changes

to the litter laws in South Carolina.

Once the changes were passed State Forester Scott Phillips

and Steve were invited for the governor's signing of the bill. Steve has been a part of litter discussions with the Forestry Association, landowners associations and many other groups with litter issues across the state of South Carolina.

The litter conference/summit held September 7–10 2022 in Myrtle Beach was Steve's last as president. He presented Lieutenant Governor Pamela Evette the David Thomas Award for her leadership in the prevention efforts across the state of South Carolina. David Thomas was a senator from



Ward presented Lieutenant Governor Pamela Evette the David Thomas Award for her leadership in the prevention efforts across the state of South Carolina in September.

Greenville who was active in litter enforcement, litter laws and cleaning up litter across the state. The award is given to a person or group that has heart to stop littering in the state. Lieutenant Governor Evette keeps litter conversation active in the State House and she leads by being part of litter clean up across the state.

Steve also had the privilege of passing the role of president to Donna Thomas of Dorchester Environmental Services. Thomas will be the first lady president since the association began in 1989. Steve will now sit on the board as the past president in an advisor roll until the next new president is elected.

**MANCHESTER**

—Steve Ward

Lead instructor Wayne Smith and student Lance Cumbie observe Tracey Scalzott getting bogged down in preparation for learning winching techniques.



## Black River Holds Bay Training for Dozer Operators

The Black River Unit held a dozer operator training class in Carvers' Bay in Georgetown County August 9. With permission from Charles Ingram Lumber Co., a course was set up on their property in the footprint of the Murphy Fire, which occurred in 2013.

### BLACK RIVER

—Ron Holt

Photos from this fire and its difficult terrain have been featured in the "Bay Fires" portion of Basic Fire School for the last several years. Some techniques were previously taught at the Piedmont Forestry Center's Dozer Operator class held earlier this year, as well as a couple of techniques that were taught at this year's Geographical Area Heavy Equipment Operator course held in Mississippi.

Three new Black River forestry technicians attended the training session: Georgetown Sector Forestry Technician Is Tracey Scalzott and Brendon Williams and Williamsburg Sector Forestry Technician I Lance Cumbie. All three have less than a year's firefighting experience with our

agency.

Georgetown Sector Forestry Technician I Wayne Smith was the lead instructor, while Black River Unit Forester Ron Holt taught some techniques that he observed in Mississippi. Georgetown Sector Forestry Technician Is Brad Jones



Lance Cumbie as he returns to the firebreak out of the bay fuels.

and Jonathan York were instrumental in preparing the course, operating the D6 to assist with techniques and sharing their knowledge. Pee Dee Regional Forester Mike Ney and West Unit Forester Michael Weeks offered a few tips and observed the training. Georgetown Sector FMO Jon Thomas and Williamsburg Sector FMO Terry Cook handled logistics for the training.

Georgetown County Fire & EMS Chief James Falkenhagen, Georgetown County Emergency Management Coordinator Aaron Bostick and Garrett Howard, who is an instructor at Carver's Bay High School where a forestry/ag program is being created, also attended the training. Including these three guests helps to build local relationships with cooperators.

To start the training a briefing was held to cover hand signals, radio channels, Incident Within an Incident (IWI) procedures and other important information. The first station included winching out of a bog with a "jackknifed" plow and pulling yourself forward using a chain on the blade to get out of the bog. Skills taught at station 2 included righting a flipped-



Ron Holt (far right) instructs Brendon Williams and Tracey Scalzott on how to use a chain to flip a plow back over when no tree is available. Mike Ney is observing and assisting. Lance Cumbie is in the dozer.

over plow using a chain and track, and using a winch and tree, as well as using a chain to get off of a stump. Students also learned the proper techniques of wrapping cable and chains around a good anchor.

The most fun operation of the day was establishing a firebreak in Carolina Bay fuels. Operators were told to "punch into" the bay and experience the challenge of not being able to see where they were going while listening

to instructions over the radio. The operators then came back to clean out their line and observed how difficult it is to have an effective line in bay fuel.

We are using the after action reviews from this training, the upstate training, the Geographical Area Heavy Equipment Academy, as well as studying training programs that other southeastern states provide to help build a dozer operator curriculum for our agency in the near future!



Left: Calhoun/Orangeburg Sector FMO Jonathan Berry graduated from the SC Criminal Justice Academy Aug. 26. Right: Law Enforcement Chief Tommy Mills with Berry after Berry's swearing in at the headquarters Aug. 30.



## Berry Graduates from Criminal Justice Academy

Calhoun/Orangeburg Sector FMO Jonathan Berry graduated from the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy Aug. 26. He was sworn in as a law enforcement officer at the Forestry Commission Aug. 30.

Congratulations, Jonathan!



Spartanburg/Union Sector FMO Clay Howard and Upstate WUI Coordinator Chris Revels attended the Union County Farm Show to focus on the need for prevention efforts and calling in debris burns.

## Piedmont Region Gets a Jump on Fire Prevention Month

With things getting back to some sense of normalcy, communities and organizations are sponsoring events. The Piedmont Region took advantage of a couple of events to get ahead of Fire Prevention Month which is October. Spartanburg/Union Sector FMO Clay Howard, Spartanburg/Union Sector Forestry Technician I Greg Fowler and Upstate Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Coordinator Chris Revels attended the Union County Farm Show to focus on the need for prevention efforts and calling in debris burns.

Union County has a significantly low number of notification call-ins for debris burning. Through these types of events, we have the unique opportunity to draw in families



Families enjoyed taking snapshots with the new firefighter face cut-outs.

Revels was joined by Greenville/Pickens Sector Forestry Technician I Randy Culbreth at the Home Depot Parking Lot on North Pleasantburg Drive. There was a steady crowd throughout the event. This part of Greenville County has some significant WUI areas especially around the Paris Mountain State Park area. A Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) is in its final draft stage to address the issues in this area of Greenville County.

### FIRE PREVENTION

—Chris Revels

to connect with the young people but also using the opportunity to get our message out concerning debris burning and the need to make notification.

The following weekend Get Ready Greenville was held. This event is held to remind Greenville County residents that September is National Disaster Preparedness Month.

# Certified Arborist Exam Workshop Held at Saluda Shoals Park

The Urban & Community Forestry Program recently partnered with the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Southern Chapter to offer a two-day certified arborist exam review workshop August 30-31 at the Saluda Shoals Environmental Educational Center. This workshop is designed to support public and private sector tree care professionals preparing for the arborist certification and benefits other industry professionals with advanced knowledge in arboriculture.

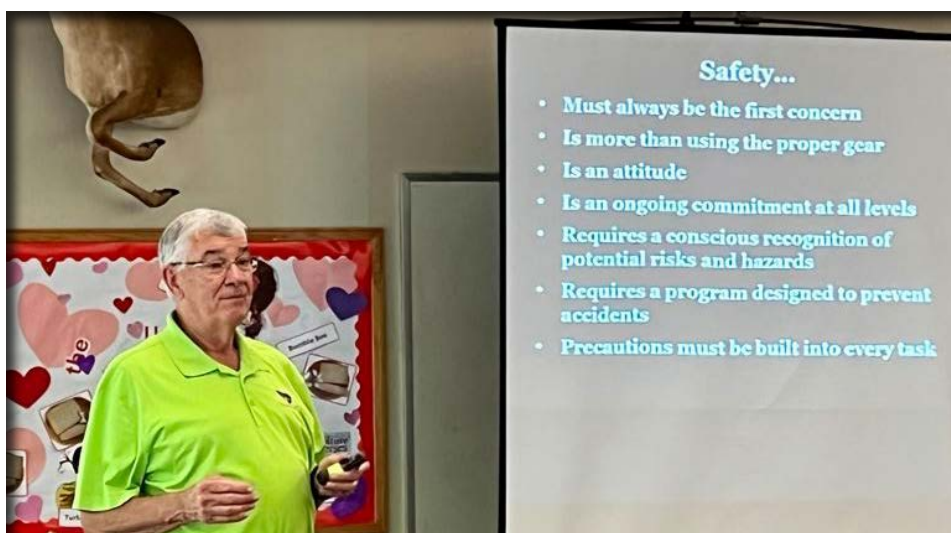
ISA is an international organization and educational forum composed of tree care professionals working in municipal, commercial, and utility forestry. ISA membership is organized into regional chapters that offer workshops and conference events in support of continuing education. ISA's Southern Chapter consists of industry professionals in SC and other southern states. An annual conference is held each year, hosted by alternating southern states and traditionally includes a tree climbing competition, exhibitor tradeshow, and educational track.

Nearly 30 individuals attended the workshop, building the largest roster for this workshop since before the pandemic! Also in attendance were several SCFC foresters, including Coastal Urban Forester Cara Specht, Berkeley/Charleston/Dorchester Project Forester Austin Phillips, Piedmont East Unit Forester Jeff Riggins and Clarendon/Sumter Project Forester Davis Martin.

To become a certified arborist, candidates must demonstrate adequate knowledge of arboriculture and management of urban trees and pass the exam with a minimum score of 76%. This breadth of knowledge includes proper tree selection, pruning,



SCFC/ISA planning committee for this workshop: Piedmont Urban Forester Dena Whitesides, Retiree and ISA Instructor Jimmy Walters, Pee Dee Urban Forester Lois Edwards and ISA Southern Chapter Director Sara Hollar.



Retiree and ISA Instructor Jimmy Walters discusses safety for arborists.

planting, and maintenance. Additional required areas of knowledge include tree climbing, insect and disease management, safety, and tree risk assessment.

Retired SCFC Urban Forester Jimmy Walters conducted the workshop, providing an in-depth overview of each chapter of the study guide. Additionally, Jimmy works for ISA's Southern Chapter as a certified instructor for the Tree Risk Assessment Qualification course and travels throughout the southeast facilitating the course

and administering the exam for this credential.

## URBAN FORESTRY

—Dena Whitesides

The Urban & Community Forestry program will continue partnering with ISA's Southern Chapter in promotion of more advanced professional knowledge in urban tree management, improved management, and healthier, more sustainable urban & community forests in SC.

# Asian Longhorned Beetle Workshop Held in Charleston

The South Carolina Forestry Commission and Clemson Extension hosted an Asian Longhorned Beetle (ALB) workshop with 24 government employees from Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia. Urban & Community Forestry staff and Forest Health staff from southeastern states were invited to learn about ALB and visit active infestation areas. Charleston County discovered the first infestation of ALB in the Southeast.

## URBAN FORESTRY —Cara Specht

Three of the agency's urban foresters and Forest Health Coordinator

David Jenkins attended the workshop in Charleston Aug. 9-10. Urban Forestry Coordinator Frances Waite, Coastal Urban Forester Cara Specht and Piedmont Urban Forester Dena Whitesides attended the workshop with Jenkins.

Clemson University's Department of Plant Industry and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) have been collaborating on eradicating the beetle since its first detection in 2020. On the first day of the workshop attendees learned about the history of ALB in the US, the current protocol and regulations of detecting ALB in a



David Jenkins, Cara Specht, Dena Whitesides and Frances Waite pose while doing a site visit at Stono River County Park.

state, and visited the USDA facility and active infestation area in Hollywood. The second day focused on ALB research studied by several graduate students, trapping efforts by David Coyle, and a visit to Stono River County Park to view infestations led by Adam Ronan from Charleston County Parks.

One behavior that was noted is that it appears the reproduction cycle of the ALB is speeding up due to warmer temperatures in the Charleston area.

## College of Charleston Recognized as Tree Campus

The College of Charleston is proud to be recognized for the first time by the Arbor Day Foundation as a Higher Education Tree Campus in 2021. Trees and green space are an integral part of the college experience. They

make campuses more livable, healthy, and beautiful, benefiting students and the environment as a whole.

Tree Campus Higher Education was founded in 2008 to foster that tradition of excellence. The program provides a simple framework for colleges and universities to grow their community forests, achieve national recognition, and create a campus their students and staff are proud of.

Colleges or university campuses can receive annual Tree Campus Higher Education recognition by meeting five overarching standards:

- Establishment of a campus tree advisory committee
- Evidence of a campus tree care plan
- Verification of the plan's dedicated annual expenditures
- Observing Arbor Day
- Creating a service-learning project aimed at engaging the student body

The College of Charleston is the ninth campus in South Carolina to be recognized as a Tree Campus.



(left to right) College of Charleston maintenance crew workers Steve Robinson and Chris Mahoney, Grounds Manager Verneil Phillips and Center for Sustainable Development Student-Intern Hannah Giblin proudly display the college's Tree Campus designation gifts.



Mike Meetze demonstrates the use of his Wood Mizer portable sawmill.

## SC PLT Facilitator Refresher Held in Newberry

Fifteen SC Project Learning Tree (PLT) Facilitators got together for a reunion and refresher at Meetze Farms in Newberry June 27. Facilitators were trained to lead professional development events in the new Trees & Me – Activities for Exploring Nature with Young Children activity guide. They got to participate in several activities

from the guide that were focused on tree textures, such as feeling mystery boxes, painting with tree textured paint, sorting tree seeds and cones based on texture, and experimenting with sandpaper. Facilitators were also updated about the PLT program and enjoyed food and fellowship!

2013 Tree Farmer of the Year Mike Meetze generously hosted the event in his renovated barn, which is made from lumber he milled from his own property. He gave the PLT Facilitators a tour of Meetze Farms and taught them how he

sustainably manages his property for timber production, recreation, carbon sequestration, aesthetics and many other environmental benefits. You can learn more about Meetze Farms on the “Land of Legacy” podcast series produced by the SC Tree Farm program: <https://www.sctreefarm.org/tree-farm-podcast-mike-meetze.htm>.

### EDUCATION

—Beth Foley



Facilitators experiment with textured paint using crushed leaves, sawdust and coffee grounds.



The Frick Sawmill at HSF will be getting a face lift with the help of a RCCC grant and donations from SC Pole and Piling and Canfor Southern Pine.

## Harbison's Frick Sawmill to Undergo Restoration Project

The SC Forestry Commission was awarded a \$13,000 grant from Richland County Conservation Commission (RCCC) to help restore the Frick Sawmill at Harbison State Forest (HSF). In 1997 before he was with the agency, Deputy State Forester Tom Patton arranged for



mill's structure to provide a more immersive learning experience. New signage will also be added to educate visitors about the history of forestry, how technological advances have significantly changed the industry, and the importance of conservation of our renewable natural resources.

Harbison State Forest and SCFC Education Staff are extremely excited about the generous grant funding awarded by the RCCC for this project. A big thank you also goes to Sam Coker with SC Pole and Piling and Josh Sandt with Canfor Southern Pine for donating poles and lumber to used in replacing the pole shed.

The grant period ends June 15, 2023, so next summer you will see some big changes behind the Education Center! If you have any question about this project or would like to contribute towards it, please contact Beth Foley SCFC Assistant Education Coordinator at [bfoley@scfc.gov](mailto:bfoley@scfc.gov) or 803-896-8855.

### EDUCATION

—Beth Foley

Mrs. Laura Bailey to donate the Frick Sawmill to SCFC in 1997 in operating condition. This mill belonged to her late husband, Tom Bailey, and was located on their property in upper Richland County, where Patton had previously helped the family with forest management. SCFC employees disassembled the mill and moved it to HSF, where it was reassembled, covered with a pole barn, displayed as an exhibit, and used to saw lumber to show how an old sawmill operated.

Unfortunately, over the past 25 years, the Frick Sawmill has not aged well. The pole shed housing the mill has succumbed to rot and decay while the roof was damaged during a post-storm. The substructure supporting the sawmill has been victimized by termites and can no longer support the intense weight of the engine and saw structure. There are also settling and erosion issues that need to be addressed.

The project's scope is to replace the pole shed housing the sawmill. The mill itself will be restored to a non-working visual representation of a Frick Sawmill. Seating for students will be added inside the

# SC Prescribed Fire Council Honors Two Retirees

The South Carolina Prescribed Fire Council presented Lifetime Achievement Awards for Excellence in Prescribed Burning to retired Allendale/Hampton/Jasper Sector FMO Terrell Smith and newly retired Piedmont Regional Forester Mike Bozzo.

This award is presented to an individual who has distinguished him or herself through a lifetime of contributions and dedication to the advancement of prescribed fire in South Carolina. The award honors an individual who has 10 or more years of experience in South Carolina as a prescribed fire practitioner, manager, or advocate; is at, or near, retirement; is leaving South Carolina after a long tenure; or is being recognized posthumously.

Mike Bozzo was nominated because of his great working relationship with other partner agencies that allows a seamless flow of information. Mike encourages agency personnel to be proactive and “safely burn as often as they can.” He is active in the Southern Blue Ridge Fire Learning Network, and gaining knowledge from their workshops has encouraged fall burning. Just a few years ago, Mike reached out



Mike Bozzo receives his lifetime achievement award from PFC Chair TJ Savereno.

to the SC State Parks to offer assistance for prescribed burning on parks in the mountain region. Since that time, prescribed burning acreages have increased dramatically.



Retiree Terrell Smith

Retired Allendale/Hampton/Jasper Sector FMO Terrell Smith fought wildfires and did prescribed burning for over 38 years in South Carolina. He also assisted with burning tracts on the Niederhof Forestry Center and burned thousands of acres of forestland.



Mike received his certificate for the award at the SC Prescribed Fire Council Annual Meeting in Clemson Sept. 7-8 and will receive his award at a later date. Terrell wasn't able to be present and will receive his award at a later date.

## Mullis Inducted Into SE Conservation Hall of Fame



Former Forestry Technician I and current Richland Soil & Water Conservation District (RSWCD) Chairman Kenny Mullis was inducted into the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Southeast Region Hall of Fame during the NACD Southeast Region Meeting earlier this month in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

The NACD Southeast Region Conservation Hall of Fame annually recognizes and honors individuals from NACD's Southeast Region who have had a significant impact or influence on conservation practice or partnerships at the local, state, territory, regional or national levels.

Congratulations, Kenny!

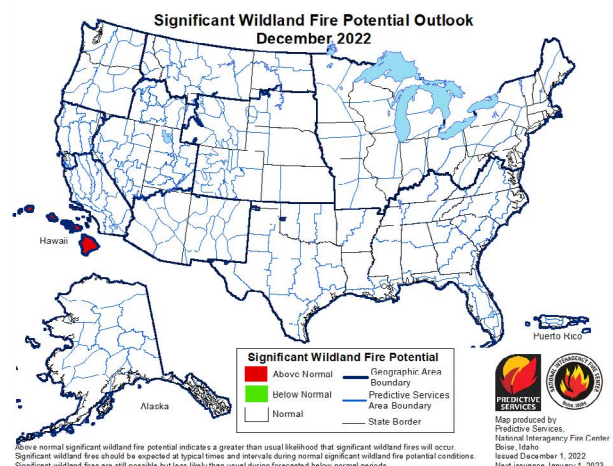
# Fire Weather Outlook

## SOUTHERN AREA

More frequent episodes of wetting rain have improved conditions across the Southern Area over the past several weeks, while Hurricane Nicole and its remnants brought drought relief to eastern portions of the geographic area. The most notable drought improvement has occurred from eastern Texas and western Louisiana into portions of eastern Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Mississippi. Beneficial rainfall associated with Nicole brought relief to eastern Tennessee and Kentucky that experienced a short-lived uptick in fire activity after the early leaf drop. Moderate to severe drought remains widespread across the region, with notable areas of Keetch-Byram Drought Indices (KBIs) above 600 across southwest Florida, the Florida panhandle into southern Alabama, western Kentucky, and Tennessee, and in localized areas across Texas and Oklahoma, where extreme to exceptional drought continues.

Looking at the bigger picture, La Niña is expected to be the dominant climate driver through winter and perhaps early spring. Even if equatorial Pacific water temperatures trend towards neutral, as is currently forecast, changes in the atmosphere typically lag by several months. More importantly, lack of soil moisture recharging typically observed during La Niña winters could maintain areas of drought and fire potential well into spring. One major area of uncertainty this winter lies in the potential for high latitude blocking over the Arctic, north Pacific, or north Atlantic Oceans. Blocking episodes, where an abnormally strong high- pressure ridge dominates the higher latitudes, have the potential to force extremely cold and dry air into the southern U.S., similar to what has already occurred twice this fall. Predicting their development is of somewhat low skill, but medium range model guidance has been persistent in showing blocking developing again by the second week of December. It is also worth noting that some years with late season hurricane impacts in the eastern US have featured abnormal cold in the South during early winter, which was also a feature of the last “triple-dip” La Niña in December 2000. La Niña should continue to favor episodes of abnormally warm and dry conditions across portions of the Southern Area, but periods of extreme cold could temper the warm signal and lead to significant winter storms if this blocking materializes. More importantly, the battle between blocking-induced cold and La Niña-favored warmth is expected to produce a stormy pattern capable of wiping out drought conditions for some portions of the South during at least the first half of December. Areas from eastern Texas and Oklahoma through the Mississippi, Ohio, and Tennessee Valleys, including the Appalachians, are most favored to see above normal precipitation or frequent wetting rainfall the first two weeks of the month. Due to this, normal significant fire potential is forecast across the geographic area through December.

Areas across the Florida Peninsula and Southeast Piedmont with high streamflow as of late November may see near to below normal large fire potential in December and January, but portions of north Florida into southern Georgia are included in above normal potential by January given the potential for rapidly developing or worsening drought. A warm and dry winter is perhaps most likely for the coastal Southeast, thus an early start to the spring season is maintained for the coastal plain and coasts of the Carolinas into southern Georgia and northern Florida, with above normal potential continuing into March. Lastly, several agencies have expressed concern that salt-cured fuels associated with Ian’s historic storm surge could easily burn at any moment. Because of this and the likelihood of drought development this winter, southwest Florida is included in above normal potential for February and March. KBIs in south and southwest Florida are already trending above 500, especially over portions of the Everglades and Big Cypress National Parks.



—National Interagency Fire Center

## CURRENT FIRE NUMBERS FOR SOUTH CAROLINA

### MONTH AND YEAR TO DATE COMPARISON TO PREVIOUS 5- AND 10-YEAR AVERAGE

Time Period	NOVEMBER		JULY-NOVEMBER		FISCAL YEAR	
	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres
5 Year Average	64	272.8	318	1,588.7	1,379	9,058.9
10 Year Average	90	1,429.6	356	2,605.9	1,475	10,133.8
Current FY <sup>1</sup>	77	432.6	339	1,542.4	339	1,542.4

<sup>1</sup>To date for current fiscal year

